THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, the 25th March 1959.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Fort St. George, at half past eight of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAU) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Maniamkaram tax

* 983 *Q*.—SRI T. T. DANIEL: Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government are negotiating with the Kerala Government for the abolition of Maniamkaram tax in the Kanyakumari district;

(*b*) whether the Government propose to constitute a Top-Level Committee consisting of the representatives of the people of the Kanyakumari District to advise the Government in this matter;

(*c*) whether the Kerala Government have placed before the State Government proposals for the abolition of the Maniamkaram tax; and

(*d*) if so, what the proposals are?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU: (*a*), (*c*) & (*d*) The questions as to how the Sri Pandaravagai lands in the transferred territory should be treated and relief afforded to the tenants of the area who pay rent in respect of those lands and Thiruppuvaram in respect of those and other kinds of lands are under examination in consultation with the Collector and the Board of Revenue. The Government are also in correspondence with the Kerala Government (who have put forward certain suggestions in regard to the treatment of Sri Pandaravagai lands), with a view not only to arrive at an equitable settlement with the authorities of the Sri Padmanabhaswami temple in respect of the rent from Sri Pandaravagai lands but also to evolve a fair arrangement in regard to Thiruppuvaram, which is now payable in respect of lands of the different tenures to the temple authorities and to others.

(*b*) No Sir, the Government do not have any such proposal under their consideration at present.

SRI T. T. DANIEL: May I know from the Hon. Minister whether at least a conference of the representatives of the people of the district will be held at an early date so that the Government can ascertain their wishes also for negotiating with the Kerala Government for the abolition of the Maniamkaram tax?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU : After the examination of this question is completed, the suggestion of the hon. Member will be considered.

SRI T. S. RAMASWAMY PILLAI : May I know whether the Government is aware that a high level committee, the Damodara Asan Committee was appointed by the Kerala Government to go into the question in detail and that committee has recommended the abolition of the Thiruppuvaram tax without any compensation?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU : Yes, Sir, I have also heard of the report of the Committee. All that can be considered.

SRI T. T. DANIEL : May I know whether the Kerala Government have brought to the notice of this State Government the decision of the Panampalli Govinda Menon Ministry about the abolition of Maniamkaram tax?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU : My impression is that the Kerala Government have suggested the abolition of the tax and also suggested that where the temples are now looked after by the Travancore Devosum Board should continue to be looked after by them or transferred to the Religious Endowment Board of this State compensating them. All these will be considered, Sir.

SRI T. T. DANIEL : May I know whether the negotiations now being carried on are being made on the basis of the reports and decisions of the erstwhile Travancore-Cochin State on the recommendations of the Damodara Asan Committee in regard to the abolition of Maniamkaram tax?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU : All these details will be gone into, Sir.

SRI T. S. RAMASWAMY PILLAI : May I know whether the Government are aware of the fact that the tax burden is accumulating and getting unbearable and if so whether the Government will take speedy steps to abolish the tax?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU : Only recently we have received the report and the matter is under correspondence with the Kerala Government. We are actually examining the question and we will come to a decision as soon as possible.

"*Sripandaravagai*" and "*Thiruppuvaram*"

*984 *Q.*—SRI T. T. DANIEL : Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether a Bill relating to the abolition of Sripandaravagai is sent to the Government by the Kerala Government;

(*b*) what the main recommendations of the Bill are; and